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Africa - East

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EUROPEAN TRUSTEESHIP.

The present comparatively small number of Europeans who have settled this land and now occupy it, spreading in all directions, will be regarded in history as the first wave, of strata, over-laying the mass of black humanity indigenous to the land. We will be considered as the early colonists in European settlement and the line we may take - or our Government takes for us - will be judged in its wisdom by its results. And the great test question of the future is in our native policy. If we follow the lead that comes to us from England we should prepare the present for a future native dependency, working on the assumption that we are simply the trustees for the native tribes around us and not here permanently to control and definitely to colonise. But there seems little doubt that we are shaping the future based on different lines. We regard the present European settlement seriously and do not hesitate to bring up our children to the heritage we are providing them with. We are trustees for the native only so far as training them to be useful members of the community, just as we train our children to be good citizens of the land of their birth and adoption. So the sooner this pretence, officially postulated in the White Paper, is treated as mere convenient parable not to be seriously accepted, the better.

These reflections arise from a statement made by Sir Sydney Henn, M.P., in the House of Commons during the debate on the Colonial Office estimates. He said inter alia: "The day will come when all shall realise that it is a very solid advantage to the Empire to have that little block of white men of our race established perfectly firmly in the highlands in the centre of Africa. It will provide a guarantee for good order and defence of any rights which the British Empire may possess in that part of the world." - Now these sentiments are precisely what the true Kenya colonist feels. He feels that apart from individual welfare he has a higher trust and aim to work for. There is always a dash of romance and poetry in the imaginative and restless pioneer. He makes his/

his home abroad in the first instance because he prefers a pioneer life to the conventional restrictions of the Home land. Or he is driven abroad from pure stress of need, not being able to establish himself comfortably in his native land. But the land of his adoption soon grows on him and but a very small proportion of colonists finally elect to return to live in the Mother Country. That is what is happening here. We have already established a settled community which is growing and is likely to continue to grow. That being the case the theory of trusteeship in the sense it is intended does not carry.

It all depends upon the policy we pursue in treating the natives what kind of future this country will have. Under civilised conditions the natives will increase. If he be permitted to be misled and deceived by Government, or any other authority, and be told that he can jump into the full panoply of citizenship in a day; having no need to go through the same travail as other races in their evolutionary advancement; he will believe it and resent racial distinctions. If, instead of being first taught the need to work and gradually improve his understanding, he be marshalled and organised straight away into "Taxpayers Associations," "Young Kikuyu Brotherhood" or the "Kavirondo Political Association and Debating Society" very sore trouble will follow. And posterity will blame the present generation for being foolish enough in permitting this pernicious beginning without protest or effort to check it. As in the case of the Asiatic, it is not education alone that is going to bring race equality. Printing and learning in China are as old as its hills, yet little Japan would overrun China to-morrow and master it, if it were not for the jealousy of the Western world. If the African native is taught that he may to-day aspire to a participation in governing such a false teaching will multiply the race of agitators and diminish the race of solid workers. And such a condition of things will prepare the ground for native unrest, resistance of control and ultimate bloodshed. They say, hell is paved with good intentions, and paraphrasing what the Hon. Mr Shams-ud-deen said in his letter to this paper on Saturday, "The natives here want some one to save them from their friends."